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MissionsFEST reaches Holmes County

By Tony Martin
Associate Editor

The numbers alone are impressive, but what really set the Mississippi Delta MissionsFEST apart was the impact the event had on the lives of the people the project were designed to reach.

An estimated 300 volunteers from 13 states descended on the Delta region April 7-13 as part of MissionsFEST. The Delta was one of seven mission sites from across the nation chosen by the national Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) in Birmingham to serve as a volunteer missions opportunity for adults. The project was executed as a partnership between national WMU, Mississippi WMU, local Baptist associations, local churches, and Entergy Corporation. In the case of Entergy,

the utility company provided many of the materials used to weatherize and repair homes.

The volunteers focused their work in Holmes County to reach out through various ministry and service projects during the week. Volunteers worked with local churches and agencies to conduct prayerwalking, door-to-door outreach, construction, cleanup, sports clinics, tutoring and reading, block parties, a health prayer,

and other ministries. Projects lasted from three to seven days. Most of the volunteers stayed at

Central Hills Retreat near Kosciusko, the state's Royal Ambassadors campground.

"These MissionsFEST volunteers are a special group of people. They travel long distances at their own expense to minister to people they have never met and probably will never meet again. These volunteers have varied backgrounds and experiences but all believe they can make a difference by coming together for a common purpose," said Tammy Anderson, special projects coordinator for Mississippi WMU.

One unique construction project was the building and landscaping of a "victory garden," located in downtown Tchula between the local bank and the Grace Community Church building. The garden has flowering plants and shrubs, benches, and a gazebo as a focal point.

Kristy Carr, volunteer coordinator specialist for national WMU, pointed out details of the garden.

"This garden will be a place where peo-

ple can socialize and take a break from their day," she said. "This is just one small part of what we were trying to accomplish in this area. We want to reach people for Christ. We can do that by meeting their spiritual and physical needs, and that's what MissionsFEST is all about."

"We have volunteers here from ages 18-80," Carr continued. "There's something for everyone to do. We have people reading and tutoring in the schools, we have groups prayerwalking, and others going door-to-door, sharing the Gospel."

"You need to know, though, that there's no way national WMU could do this project without the partnership of Mississippi WMU. They've been terrific," Carr stated.

According to Anderson, volunteers went door-to-door in Holmes County communities, giving away "hospitality kits" containing personal hygiene and other supplies, and also containing a copy of Scripture or a tract. An estimated 3200 of these bags were distributed, and volunteers were always ready to share a word of testimony, a prayer, or take advantage of an opportunity to share the Gospel. Thirty-two decisions for salvation were recorded.

Christi Price of Greenwood, door-to-door outreach coordinator, said, "We wanted to demonstrate the love of Christ in a tangible way. We were amazed at how many people asked us to pray for them. Our workers didn't want to quit," she continued. "They were full of love for the people they were visiting, and had such giving spirits. No one was inhibited in the least to go into any neighborhood."

An estimated 800-900 locals participated in the block parties in Lexington and Tchula. "We had games for the kids, free hot dogs [prepared by the Holmes County Baptist disaster relief unit], door prizes, music, face painting — you name it," said Carr. Other volunteers were



ALL HEART — This unidentified young man has a heart painted on his face during Tchulafest, the block party event hosted as a part of MissionsFEST April 7-13. The event was a partnership endeavor between national Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) and Mississippi WMU. (Photo by Tony Martin)

related at this ministry opportunity. "I'll never forget this week," said Debbie McVey from Montpelier, Va. McVey was one of several workers who were repairing and winterizing one of 17 homes in the area. "It's a reminder to me that I have to keep going and serving after I get home."

Jesse Bowers, from Deland, Fla., said, "You come to a week like this with the idea that you're going to minister, but you go away saying you've been blessed more than those you ministered to."

Liana Benn, one of three women from Hawaii participating in MissionsFEST, said, "This is my first visit to Mississippi. I have no doubt that God sent us here."

Sarah Williams and her sister, Avery Lee Williams, had their childhood home repaired by a group of volunteers.

"I just can't believe how nice everyone has been," said Williams. "When it rained, water would just flood our house. We've lived here close to 60 years, and it means all the world to me to have these folks take care of us."

"You just don't know what all this has meant to me, and I'm sure gonna miss everyone when they're gone."



WALKING, PRAYING — A pair of unidentified prayerwalkers bathe one of Tchula's neighborhoods in prayer as an critical part of the MissionsFEST strategy during the project in the Mississippi Delta. (Photo by Tony Martin)



FAST BREAK — Burnadette McDonald (second from right) of Mississippi Delta Community College in Moorhead, leads a basketball clinic in the gym of Marshall School in Tchula in conjunction with MissionsFEST, a project of national Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) in cooperation with Mississippi WMU. (Photo by Tony Martin)

WHAT'S IN THE RECORD

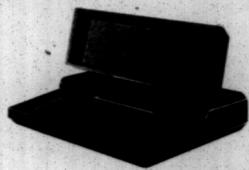
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In search of the real Eve

...the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. (Gen. 2:7 NIV)

Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. (Gen. 2:22 NIV)

One of the most difficult aspects of creation for our friends in the scientific community to accept is the manner in which human beings came to exist. Many theories abound, starting at the beginning with the idea that lightning struck a roiling swamp of primordial goo somewhere on earth and out popped our distant, single-celled ancestors.

From that point until concrete evidence of humanity appears in the archeological record, scientists have attempted to link humans through an evolutionary chain with everything from small mice-like mammals to tree-dwelling monkeys. To make their case, they often point to the physical similarities between humans and other creatures while ignoring the contradictions. Nevertheless, evolution is almost universally accepted in the scientific community as the catch-all explanation for the unexplainable. When there's a gap in the latest theory of our origin, evolution is offered as a

chewing-gum-in-the-hole fix for the problem.

Are we actually just a higher form of mouse? Did our ancestors of a thousand generations ago really walk on their knuckles? Why can't we simply accept the truth of the Bible that we were and are wonderfully created in the image of God?

Most Christians would say the answer to the first two questions is obvious, but the answer to the third question is harder to come by. Can it be that, in our never-ending rebellion to free ourselves from a relationship with God, accepting our inconsequential evolution from lesser creatures provides an easy way out?

If only we could prove we were not divinely created — that God himself didn't breathe life into us — and that we are nothing more than a mere biological accident, we can break our link with God.

If we can break our link with God, we can lead whatever life we please, free of moral restraints and spiritual responsibilities. We would have no one to whom we would have to answer for our actions.

In a world like that, abortion would be thought of as a morally-neutral act. Pedophilia would be considered as advantageous to the exploited child. Whoremongering would be seen as a display of manhood. Profanity would be listed in mainstream dictionaries as legitimate language. Homosexuality would be as valid as heterosexuality.

If only we could break our link to a holy and just God. Problem is, we can't. It's not possible because that holy and just God does indeed exist — and he created us just as the Bible records he did.

The Discovery Channel is presently broadcasting a fascinating documentary entitled, *The Real Eve*. While primarily an epic story of the early human diaspora that eventually populated the entirety of the earth — and containing some elements with which Christians would take issue — there is one inescapable point that runs through the two-hour presentation: we are all descended from one woman. That's right; there is scientific proof that we share a single, common, female ancestor.

Researchers know this because of the growing understanding of a very special strand of DNA contained within the cells of each of us, called mitochondrial DNA. Using analysis techniques that span several academic disciplines to study tens of thousands of mitochondrial DNA samples from people around the world, scientists

**"FACE IT, EVE—WE WERE
MADE FOR EACH OTHER!"**



have concluded that everyone who is alive today is related to one female who existed at the dawn of humanity. Says Stephen Oppenheimer of Oxford University in England, one of the scientists interviewed for *The Real Eve*: "This really brings home that we are one big, very close family."

The Bible got it right. There was an Adam, there was an Eve, there is a divine Creator, and we are all members of the family of God. If indeed there is a divine Creator, then there is a higher authority than ourselves to whom we must answer. As upsetting as that reality is to many people, it's still reality. God lives, he created us, he sent his only begotten Son to save us, and we have been commissioned to tell the whole world the Good News. Let's get busy!

GUEST OPINION:



When children are sacrificed

By David P. Gushee
Jackson, Tenn.

of adults, even to the point of death. Is it implausible, then, to conclude that our general behavior toward children may be less idealistic than what we tend to believe, and that it may even add to the phenomenon of violent and sexual assaults on children?

The quest for adult romantic happiness is another altar upon which today's children are sacrificed. The mass practice of divorce, out-of-wedlock birth, and cohabitation have all shattered our understood ways of best caring for and raising children. Adults pursuing their own romantic and sexual needs often selfishly subordinate the interests of the various children they produce along the way. Perhaps most insidiously, many tell themselves the socially-promoted lie that their children's happiness can best be

guaranteed through the pursuit of their own adult happiness.

In such families, at any given moment, some strange adult, perhaps toting some set of strange children from a previous relationship, is moving into an impressionable child's life while another adult, perhaps a loving parent, is moving out. Life within these emotionally chaotic households clearly lacks the security and stability for which children have a proven need.

Then we have the "boyfriend problem," in which divorced adults introduce unrelated men and women into their own homes as cohabitating lovers. Living in proximity with children they do not love but sometimes come to desire sexually, these live-in strangers (primarily but not exclusively men) are responsible for a vastly dispro-

portionate share of child physical and sexual abuse.

Much may be said about beauty pageants for toddlers, especially those that emphasize the sexuality of preadolescent children. Do they establish a life of healthy competition leading to rewards for well-balanced young women, or are they a subtle form of "acting-out" for underachieving parents, perhaps even a form of sexual abuse? Who is there to protect a two- or three-year-old girl who couldn't possibly know the difference?

The Bible demands that the powerful stand up for the powerless, that those who have a voice speak up for those who do not. Children have less power than women, less than men, less than anyone. Adults used to sacrifice for children. Now children are often sacrificed for adults. Considered in its many forms, not all listed here, this child sacrifice is the gravest moral outrage of our time.

Gushee is the Graves Associate Professor of Moral Philosophy and senior fellow with the Carl F.H. Henry Center for Christian Leadership at Union University, Jackson, Tenn. He is a regular columnist for Baptist Press.

Seminary student 'rassled' with God's call

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — Many seminarians wrestle with their call to ministry. You could say Keith McCray "rassled" with his. For more than a decade, the current Boyce College student's life revolved around bodyslams, headlocks, and turn-buckle tussles. Yet after 12 years on the professional wrestling circuit, McCray — formerly known to his fans as Steve Storm — finally gave in gladly in his match with his calling. God won his life.

Now, the only thing he has to remind him of his days in the ring is a necklace with his symbol as a wrestler: a lightning bolt. He had seven separated shoulders and two major knee surgeries. He also has a missing tooth and a finger that will never be straight again.

"I've had more concussions that you can count in my career," said McCray, a bachelor of science student at the Louisville, Ky., college affiliated with Southern Seminary, "but each one was worthwhile because it brought me to where God wanted me."

McCray's life, though, did not start out so violently. Born outside of Philadelphia, he attended church regularly and was baptized at age 10. Soon, however, he began following a different path — one patterned after a rebellious brother rather than the Word of God. When McCray graduated from high school, he was still straying.

He began a search for meaning. What he found was Uncle Sam. "I went into the Army because I was trying to find what I was looking for,"



WRESTLING STAR — Keith McCray, formerly known as "Steve Storm," poses for a publicity photo while spending more than a decade as a professional wrestler before giving in to God's call to ministry. (BP special photo)

McCray said. "I got there, and there was still that void."

He advanced quickly and joined an elite counter-terrorism unit. "It was a complete adrenaline rush, but there was still a gaping hole," he said.

It is a career about which he cannot talk much. "When we were called in, we were not called in for negotiations," he said. "As my commanding officer told us, 'We were there to use body bags.' ...It's not something to brag about, but it's something that we were taught."

After six years, McCray got tired of pushing his luck and searching for significance in the Army, so he decided to wrestle

for meaning in another ring: the professional wrestling circuit.

McCray achieved great success in this fast-paced, fast-growing entertainment industry. He wrestled with several federations, including the World Wrestling Federation and World Championship Wrestling, and Extreme Championship Wrestling.

McCray is full of wrestling stories. One is his worst injury night while fighting a fellow wrestling friend.

"By the time it was all said and done, I had seven stitches in my lip, had lost a tooth, had a concussion, torn [cartilage] in my knee, and my finger will never be straight again," McCray said.

Yet, despite his fame and fortune, God had yet to enter McCray's ring. He was empty, but one day God woke him up: A severely blown

knee did the trick.

"As soon as I heard the knee pop, the first thing that popped into my head was, 'Oh God,'" McCray said. "For so many years, I hadn't thought about him and all of a sudden I needed him."

It was a typical little prayer, McCray said. He would give his life to God if God would help him through surgery. God kept his end of the bargain. McCray did only for a little while.

Then God woke him up again. "I blew out the other knee," McCray said.

McCray still hadn't gotten the message totally. McCray left wrestling, partly to run some Gold's Gyms, partly because of his injuries, and partly because of his dissatisfaction with the wrestling business.

"It had gone from the car-

toon, comic book heroes to all of a sudden a more edgier and racier product," McCray said.

McCray spent eight years with Gold's Gym. God gave him everything he always thought would bring meaning and significance, then took it away. New management forced McCray out of Gold's.

"I was left with no job," McCray recalled. "I was just totally, utterly lost. I had no clue what to do."

Life had pinned him down for the count. So one night, in despondency, he started praying to God. "I actually shot up out of my chair and looked around," McCray recounted, "and I dropped to my knees and I renewed a relationship that was long overdue."

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God revealed to him a calling as well: youth ministry.

"After I renewed the relationship and God showed me where I was, he started bringing me along," McCray said.

He came to Boyce last year to obtain a degree in youth ministry, believing that God can use his past to reach youth. In fact, McCray would like to use wrestling as a platform for the Gospel.

"Satan has used everything he could to distract the kids, and it's about time we use some of the things we have to attract them," he said.

There's another ministry McCray takes very seriously. "Baptists have a really bad reputation as being 'buffet Baptists,'" he said.

"If you eat properly and exercise, you can add 15-20 years to your ministry. That's 15-20 years of touching people's lives," he said.



THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

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Church must pay

COLUMBIANA, Ala. (BP) — First Church of Columbiana, Ala., will pay \$950,000 to the family of Terry White, a 16-year-old boy who drowned May 31, 2000, while on a missions trip with the church, a Baldwin County jury has ruled. The jury found that the church should be sued for punitive damages in a wrongful death suit issued by White's parents, Norman and Quilla White. The parents sued the church for \$2 million, but were granted \$950,000. "I feel that two tragedies have occurred," said Mike Miller, the church's pastor. "The first one was a terrible accident May 31, 2000, that rendered a tragic loss of life. The second was on April 3, 2002, when the jury rendered the verdict." He noted that the jury's decision sets a dangerous precedent for churches in Alabama, and feels blessed because First Church has insurance to cover the amount. The church plans to continue its mission to serve God. "We're going to put this behind us because God has plans for us," Miller said. "We are in the middle of a strategic planning process, and we will not let a temporary setback get in our way. Satan is trying to put a roadblock in front of us, and we're not going to let it keep us from continuing to be on mission together for the glory of God." Miller also gave advice for other churches: "You can't let the fear of an unforeseen accident hinder you from doing God's work and being on mission for Jesus Christ."

Looking back

10 years ago

Paige Patterson, an architect of the conservative resurgence in the Southern Baptist Convention, is the nominee for president of Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C. — confirming speculation going back before Lewis Drummond's official retirement announcement.

20 years ago

A tornado rips through Philadelphia, leaving a mark of destruction on many Baptist families in the city and severely damaging one local church. Mt. Nelson Church sustained significant damage when a tree was blown over on the roof of the church.

50 years ago

Crowder Church, Crowder, reports that 350 people accepted the Lord Jesus for salvation during a week-long revival with evangelist Douglas Winn. Grades four through 12 at the local schools were dismissed to attend the morning services.

Ag Missions answering BCV's food needs

By Tony Martin
Associate Editor

Napoleon supposedly said, "An army travels on its stomach." A well-fed soldier is a good soldier, the reasoning went.

For the kids at the Baptist Children's Village (BCV), food is just as important to their health and well-being. Frank Prewitt, a member of First Church, Belzoni, is working with many others in the Delta and around the state to make sure BCV doesn't go wanting.



PEAS FOR BCV — Dick Stafford (left) of Immanuel Church, Greenwood, and Hugh Therrell, also of Immanuel Church, cool pink-eye purple hull peas at Conway headquarters in Greenwood. The peas were bagged and sent to the Baptist Children's Village. (BR special photo)

used volunteers to grow, process, and deliver food items to BCV. In a recent twelve-month period, the Children's Village used 4500 lbs. of fish filets; 11,283 lbs. of beef products; 12,500 lbs. of chicken; 3500 lbs. of green beans; and 2000 dozen eggs — and that's just a sampling that doesn't include other vegetables, pork products, rice, etc.

Prewitt has encouraged individuals, churches, and associations to help supply these needs. "A family could plant an acre of their own property in peas or corn to be donated to BCV. Ladies from the Woman's Missionary Union could help pick the peas and put them up. They could then be delivered to BCV," he pointed out.

"I could see this be taken on as a church project, where church members pick the peas, shell them, blanch them, and get them ready to go," he said.

Not only does BCV need vegetables, but meats are welcome, too. "The idea, really, is for the volunteers to do it all," said Prewitt. "Fish would be good. A family could slaughter a cow and take it out to the Village, or they could donate a cow to the Village, have it slaughtered, and just give the money to the Village. Same thing with hogs and pork."

Prewitt wants to be sure everyone understands that



PEA-PICKERS — Volunteers pick peas in the pea patch of Charles and Shirley Keenum of Belzoni, to be shelled, blanched, and "put up" for delivery to the Baptist Children's Village. (BR special photo)

they are not to just show up at BCV with a hamper of peas, or unload a cow on the hoof at the door. "This all has to be coordinated, and we can help with that," he said.

Jim Didlake, director of the Men's Ministry department, has been delighted with the response to the project.

"We've had neighboring states look at what we're doing in Mississippi, with an eye towards starting similar ministries in their states," Didlake said. "We're trying to build up Fellowships in those states, and this is a great model and encouragement for them."

Prewitt is also encouraged by the response to the work, and feels that with proper publicity even more of BCV's needs could be met.

"Just by getting involved in this project," he said, "I'll bet we could save BCV thousands of dollars each year in food costs."

For more information, contact Prewitt directly at (662) 247-1560, in the evenings, or the Men's Ministry Department at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3334 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 334. E-mail: cwright@mbcb.org.

MBC ends ties with newspaper

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (BP) — Southern Baptists in Missouri will soon have a new official newsjournal, apparently marking an end to its 105-year relationship with the Word & Way. By a solid majority on a voice vote, members of the Missouri Baptist Convention (MBC) executive board moved April 9 to establish a new newsjournal as its official publication effective immediately.

The Word & Way board of trustees voted recently to become self-perpetuating, eliminating the ability of MBC to appoint trustees. After the newspaper board's vote, the MBC board escrowed \$450,000 that would have normally gone to support the newspaper.

Reccord: infidelity destroying lives, ministries

ONTARIO, Calif. (BP) — Just as a hidden iceberg destroyed the Titanic after the crew ignored multiple warnings, lives and ministries of pastors and other church staff are being destroyed at a remarkable rate by sexual infidelity, the president of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board (NAMB) warned a group of pastors, missionaries and other denominational leaders.

Robert E. Reccord also is author of the book "Beneath the Surface: Steering Clear of the Dangers That Could Leave You Shipwrecked," published by the Broadman & Holman Publishers division of LifeWay Christian Resources. He shared content from the book during the April 10-13 Connection 2002 conference in Ontario, Calif., the first of three NAMB-sponsored regional conferences this spring.

Reccord cited survey statistics from the book "Men's Secret Wars" by Patrick Means that indicated 64% of pastors or church staff struggled with sexual addiction or compulsion. Twenty-five percent admitted to having sexual intercourse with someone besides their wife while married, and after they had accepted Christ. Another 14% admitted some form of sexual contact short of intercourse.

Reccord told of a difficult conversation he had several years ago with a friend in the ministry who had fallen because of adultery. He asked him, "What in the world were you doing? Didn't you hear the alarm bells going off?" There was a long silence, Reccord said, then the man answered, "Oh Bob, I did hear the alarms. I heard the alarms plainly, but when I heard the alarms I decided to disconnect the wires."

There is a repeatable pattern that often occurs with many kinds of sin, a pattern that first appeared in the Garden of Eden, Reccord said. First, Eve questioned whether God really said it was wrong. Then she contradicted God, rationalizing that he really didn't have her best interests at heart when he told her not to eat of the fruit.

"I find that the only time I'm really open to saying, 'Did God really say?' is when I believe God isn't giving me his best. I think he's holding back something from me," Reccord said.

He told how Joseph and David from Scripture reacted differently when faced

with sexual temptation, Joseph from Potiphar's wife and David from Bathsheba. While David overestimated his strength and yielded to temptation, Reccord said, Joseph recognized his own weakness and fled immediately at the first signs. Some of the highest-profile leaders fall hard precisely because they think, like David, that they are invulnerable, Reccord said.

"Just as much as [Satan] attacks at your weakest point, he also attacks you at what you think is your strongest point," Reccord said, later adding that life-altering sin can happen remarkably quickly. "There is not a person in this room that is not one step from stupid at any given moment."

Reccord also noted the importance of every Christian leader having someone to whom he is accountable, someone who will ask him the hard questions about his personal life and thoughts. He noted research which found little in common among more than 200 fallen ministers except two things: all no longer had a regular quiet time in fellowship with God, and none had made themselves accountable to a person or group.

"Nobody takes accountability from you," he said. "You've got to give accountability. You've got to go to someone and say, 'I need your help.'"

Reccord also pointed to God's warning through Moses in Deuteronomy of the dangers of turning toward false gods.

"The minute you start looking to something or someone to provide what only God can provide, you are worshiping other gods," he said.



PLEA FOR PURITY — Robert E. Reccord, president of the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention in Atlanta, cautioned pastors, missionaries, and other denominational leaders attending the April 10-13 Connection 2002 conference to avoid temptations that lead to sexual infidelity. (Photo by James Dotson)

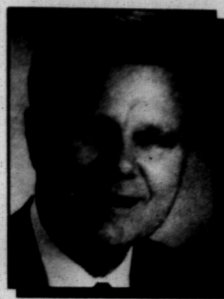
IN APPRECIATION OF CHURCH SECRETARIES

This week is National Secretaries Week. I want to take this moment to say a huge, "Thank You" to all of our secretaries, especially those who are serving in such important, crucial roles as church secretaries.

Some of the most wonderful Christians you will ever meet are those ladies who are serving as secretaries in our churches. Some churches and organizations have changed the name from secretary to ministry assistant to special assistant to support staff, etc. Whatever you may call them they are vital to the success of so much of what we try to do in church and ministry.

Years ago George Allen, the great football coach, was being interviewed. He was asked, "If you were starting a new football team who would be the very first person you would choose to help you build a winning team?"

"The very first person?" Allen asked. "Yes," responded the inquisitive reporter. Of course, the reporter was thinking in terms of the football stars of the day, the best quarterback in the league, the up and coming running back, or maybe some great defensive player. To the amazement of the reporter, none of those people were chosen.



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

George Allen said, "The very first person I would choose would be the best receptionist/secretary I could find." The reporter smiled and thought how insignificant. George Allen did not think it was unimportant and pressed on with his insights. "You see," he said, "It is that person who everybody that you deal with is going to come in contact with first of all. Every impression of the organization from then on will be made by her. Every player, every coach, every vendor who deals with the team is going to meet that person, hear that voice, and have that image in mind of what the organization is like. People will like or dislike the coach, the organization, or its way of doing business on the basis of their contact with that person."

That is an incredible insight that we often overlook. All across our state are hundreds of wonderful people, most of them ladies who are doing a wonderful job. (I am not aware

of a male secretary in any of our churches, though there could be some.) They are doing a Kingdom-size work in helping not only pastor, staff, and church leaders, but everyone with whom they come in contact to be a part of what the Lord is trying to do through us.

To briefly expand on what Coach Allen said about the secretary being the first impression that people will receive about the organization, I might add that probably it will be the most lasting impression that people have. That first impression, if not good, is hard to erase. In fact, it may be impossible to eradicate from our minds. What a great responsibility and what a great opportunity of service it is. That is not the most amazing thing that comes to mind when I think about our secretaries across the state. More amazing to me is what is described in today's terms as multi-tasking. The list of things a secretary is called on

to do, many times two or three at the same time, is endless.

Just so that you can get a picture of what secretaries are called on to be involved in, let me just make you a partial list. They are the typist, computer guru, grammarian, receptionist, linguist, hostess, investigator (trying to find the pastor or staff member for whom someone is calling), nurse, doctor, counselor, EMT, information center, negotiator, driver, parliamentarian, coach, politician, decorator, cook, seamstress, servant, painter, printer, mathematician, electrician, lawyer, locksmith, and accountant.

While doing any and all of these tasks, they manage to maintain the sweetest of spirits and exemplify the very presence of Jesus to everyone they come in contact with. That is just when they are at work. Before and after work, many (if not most) are mothers, daughters, wives, grandmothers, church members, committee members, PTA members, and all that every one of those roles encompasses.

So to all of our church secretaries, associational secretaries, and secretaries in our Baptist institutions and colleges, thank you so much for the fantastic job you do, for being such a significant part of the great Kingdom work, and may the Lord and his people bless you this week.

Brunson is candidate for Pastors' Conf.

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP). — Texas pastor Mac Brunson will be nominated president of the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference, according to Ken Whitten, the current president of the organization and pastor of Tampa's Idlewild Church.

Brunson, senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas, where he has served since April of 1999, is the second Texan to be put forward as a candidate for this year's Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) leadership. Fellow Texan Jack Graham, pastor of Prestonwood Church in Plano, was announced Feb. 4 as a nominee for SBC president when he was introduced at the Pastors' Conference of First Church, Jacksonville.

So. Baptists seeking ways to evangelize Jews

DALLAS (BP) — As diplomats worked to end hostility between Israel and their Arab neighbors, 15 Southern Baptists gathered in Dallas to forge a strategy for offering eternal peace to Jews wherever they live. The April 15-18 Summit on Jewish Evangelism drew participation by church planters, evangelists, and ministry leaders who share a common burden for God's chosen people.

Throughout the meeting, times of prayer focused on the conflict involving Israel. One participant asked God to "give us another time of peace that we may share the Gospel freely." Another prayed for Southern Baptists working in the region to have "the wisdom to decide how to keep their own families safe." Underlying every petition was the recognition "that Jesus is the only hope for real peace."

Jim Sibley, coordinator of Jewish ministries for the North American Mission Board (NAMB) interfaith evangelism team, convened the meeting at Criswell College, inviting Southern Baptist representatives from several overseas regions and three Messianic Jews engaged in planting congregations in Chicago, New York City, and Atlanta. Together, they identified areas where sizeable Jewish populations exist, evaluated the effectiveness of current outreach to Jews, and considered a joint vision for Jewish ministry within the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC).

Sibley defines the Jewish people as an ethnic group made up primarily, though not exclusively, of the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. "They are unique among the peoples of the world, in that God has specially chosen them for his purposes in history," he wrote in a recent article.

By the end of the week, summit participants left with recommendations they will share with the entities to which they relate, laying the groundwork for a network for part-

nering on a global basis. "We're arguing for taking a more unified approach to reach the Jewish people rather than considering each on a country by country or city by city case," Sibley told a luncheon audience of guests from churches, colleges, and seminaries.

"Not only is Israel at the center of current events," Sibley said, "Israel is at the center of the Great Commission. In our evangelistic and missionary efforts, however, so often we operate as though God had made no lasting covenant with the Jewish people. Tragically, I think Jewish people are often seen as one of thousands of people groups and a rather insignificant one at that."

Seminar participants, though, reasoned that all Jews should be regarded as a people group in order to frame effective evangelistic ministry. Church planters working in major U.S. cities agreed that they share much in common with Southern Baptist representatives who relate to Jews in a particular overseas region. Through stronger ties to the Southern Baptist Messianic Fellowship, participants hope to improve communication regarding all Jewish outreach by Southern Baptists.

Discussion also addressed how to utilize volunteers to establish a long-term interest in providing short-term support for a region where Southern Baptists are ministering to Jews. "People are only as good as you train them to be, and if you have a project that is well thought out, volunteers will have a clear direction of what they're to do," one experienced leader explained. "You'll get the same people back over again who are then trained in such a way that you do not have to train them again."

In churches that are unable to send volunteers to an area, members can still provide important prayer support, increasing their awareness of the 25,000 Jews living in a French city or 1,300 living in Ireland. "There may not be enough to establish a

resident missionary" in one of the many cities with a smaller Jewish population, one worker said, "but a team of people could say for the next 10 to 20 years we're going to have a heart to pray for that people group."

"No Jewish community is too small for us to be concerned about," added another representative.

Workers were encouraged to post requests for personnel to serve in such regions even if the positions go unfilled for four or five years. "It's important to put those requests up there because you never know when God is going to send someone to that small town in Ireland."

Sibley added, "In many of the regions, countries, and cities where there needs to be work, the Jewish population may be relatively small, but the significance and influence is out of proportion to the numbers," he said, arguing for establishing a ministry among Jews wherever God leads.

In his role with NAMB, Sibley provides training in evangelizing Jews during seminary J-term classes, as well as in churches, associations and state conventions. "I'll teach anybody who will ask me, from 30 minutes to a whole semester. If there's a volunteer group or a pastor's fellowship — any venue — I'm ready to come and provide the training."

"Sometimes we almost underestimate the potential, the importance, and the power of people coming to pray," Sibley said. "Once they come, they pray and go back with a vision that will not be equaled."



EVANGELIZING JEWS — Jim Sibley (center), coordinator for Jewish ministries at the North American Mission Board, visits with Steve Barack (right), pastor of a Messianic congregation north of Chicago, and Cathy Blalock of South Carolina during the April 15-18 Summit on Jewish Evangelism in Dallas. (BP photo)



Bubbles and Bubba

The 2002 children's North American Mission Study hosted by Temple Church, Big Point, was held on March 9. Eighty-four hospitality bags were assembled for Mississippi Delta Missions FET for the Mississippi River Ministry and \$87.50 was collected for the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering. Pictured are featured speakers Bubbles and

Bubba (Charlotte and Tommy Brill) of Four Mile Creek Church, Moss Point.

Homecomings

First, Bruce: May 5; Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.; worship 10:30 a.m.; dinner following worship service; and afternoon concert featuring Southern Praise; sermon by Charles Nester.

Silver Springs (Pike): April 28; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; dinner on the grounds; Harold Scott, evangelist; Southern Praise Gospel Quartet from Brookhaven will present the singing service at 1:15 p.m.

Calvary (Walthall): April 28; 47 years of service; David Chambers, Fairview, Ala., former pastor from 1991 to 1995, guest speaker; dinner on the grounds in fellowship hall; Wesley Landrum, pastor.

Parkway Church, Hernando, will host an Experiencing God Weekend May 17-19. For additional information, call David Christopher or Mike Ramage (662) 429-6045.

Youth rally will be held at Wesson Church, Wesson, at 7 p.m. on May 3 and 4. Ryan Thurman, speaker; Jason Elam, praise and worship leader. For additional information, call the church office at (601) 643-5722.

The RAs and GAs of North Carrollton Church, North Carrollton, held a food drive in February. The food items collected were used to re-stock the church's food pantry which is used for missions throughout the year to make food baskets for the needy. Pictured (from left) are Lauren Goss; Maggie Lloyd; Henry Allen Dunn, RA leader; Jade Wrenn; Morgan Clark; Ann Marie McClain; Michael Bailey; Sissy Lloyd, 1st-3rd grade GA leader; and Trevor McClain.



RAs and GAs of North Carrollton Church, North Carrollton

Sandy Hook Church, Sandy Hook, will hold dedication services for its new church building, on April 28. Activities will include Sunday School at 10 a.m.; worship at 11 a.m.; lunch; dedication and tour of building at 1:30 p.m.; reception to follow.

Improve Church, Columbia, will celebrate its 100th Anniversary this year. Celebration services will take place the second Sundays of May, June, July, and August with the July celebration being in conjunction with the week of revival. Sunday School will begin at 9:30 a.m. with worship services beginning at 10:45 a.m. The Centennial Celebration will kick off Saturday, May 11 at 6 p.m. with a hamburger supper and Gospel sing. For more information call Doyle Robbins at (601) 736-3323.

Hickory Church, Hickory, will present We Will Worship - A Call to Intimacy with God on Sunday, May 5 at 7 p.m. Admission is free but a love offering will be taken for The Baptist Children's Village. For more information call Hickory Church at (601) 646-5663.

Grays Creek Church, Hernando, will host Vacation Bible School June 24-28 from 9 a.m.-12 p.m. with Family Night on June 28 at 7 p.m. Children ages 3 through 6th grade are invited to attend. For more information call David Johns at (662) 429-5765.

Stark Reality, a musical that deals with issues relevant to students such as premarital sex, teen pregnancy, divorce, will be held April 25 and 26 at 7 p.m. in the Net Youth facility of Crossgates Church, Brandon. For additional information, contact the music ministry office at (601) 825-2562.

Robin Hadaway of the International Mission Board (IMB) will be the guest speaker in the April 28, 11 a.m. worship service of Robinwood Church, Saucier. Hadaway and his family served as missionaries in Tanzania before taking the responsibility of overseeing missionaries in Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay.

Ruleville Church, Ruleville, will have a Centennial Celebration May 25-26. Saturday, choir practice, 5 p.m.; hamburger supper, 6-6:45 p.m.; concert by Robin Webb, 7-7:45 p.m.; and fellowship until 9 p.m. Sunday, coffee and donuts, 8-9 a.m.; choir practice, 10 a.m.; and worship service, 10:30 a.m. To make meal reservations or for additional information, contact Ruleville Church, P.O. Box 187, Ruleville, MS 38771; (662) 756-4309; or e-mail at brohh@tecinfo.com.

The children of Arkadelphia Church, Bailey, had a wonderful time celebrating Easter. First, they were treated to an Easter story by John Koch, pastor, followed by an egg hunt and ending with a pizza party on March 23.



Children of Arkadelphia Church, Bailey

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THE BAPTIST CHILDREN'S VILLAGE

Mother's Day Offering 2002

Bearing the Burdens of Mississippi Children and Families

The Baptist Children's Village (BCV) is the only Southern Baptist child care agency in Mississippi. We have continually cared for Mississippi children since 1897.

Because the needs of children and their families have changed drastically since those early days, we are constantly evaluating and

adjusting the focus of this ministry to meet these ever-changing needs.

There is, however, one constant in this ministry — our

daily struggle to deal with a society that seems determined to annihilate it.

This healing in families is possible only when God is allowed to work in the lives of children, mothers, and fathers.

The ministry of the BCV focuses on the total child, working to meet the physical, emo-

tional, social, and spiritual needs of that child and his/her family.

A team of professional, Christian staff work diligently to communicate a sense of infinite worth to the hurting individuals whom God directs to us.

A full-time chaplain and psychologist as well as qualified counselors and child care workers daily show Christ's love to children and families.

As we look at the pain around us, each of us realizes that, were it not for God's limitless grace and mercy, we would all perish in a sea of darkness. We believe, as an agency, that God has called us to offer his hope to hurting children and families all over the state of Mississippi.

"And they shall bear the burden of the people with you, that you may not bear it yourself alone."

Numbers 11:17b

The BCV believes that the Lord has given us the command to bear the burdens of hurting children and families in Mississippi. We are convinced that we can bear these burdens by meeting their physical, emotional, and spiritual needs.

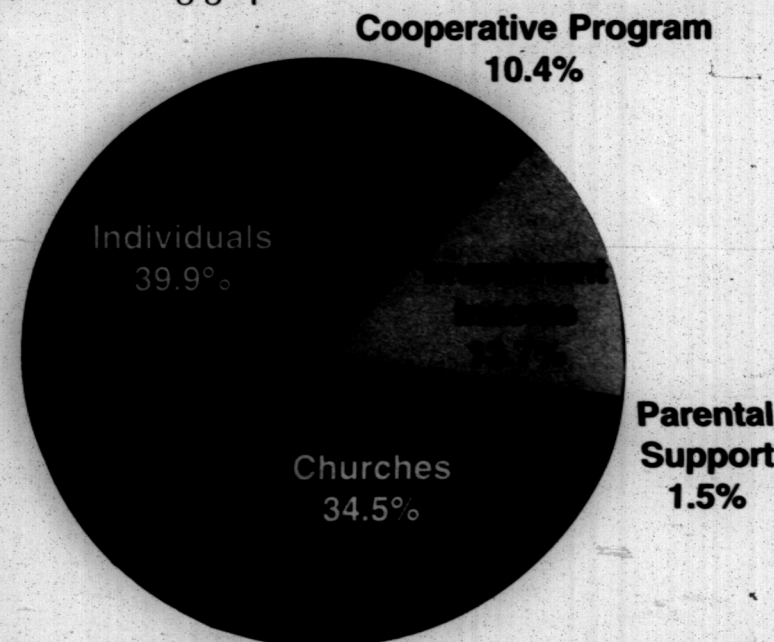
It is true, however, that we

How are we funded?

The Baptist Children's Village is a not-for-profit organization, and we neither solicit nor accept state or federal government funding.

Our 2000-01 budget is \$4,880,300 which means every day — 365 days a year — we are looking for \$13,370.68.

Income for this budget is received as illustrated on the following graph.



MEETING THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Hurting children and families have a multitude of needs. There are a variety of ways for you to help meet those needs:

- ◆ Pray for children, families, staff, and board members.
- ◆ Give financially to meet basic daily needs.
- ◆ Give financially to a specific program or ministry.
- ◆ Give non-cash gift items necessary for daily living.
- ◆ Get involved personally with a child:
 - Become a visiting family.
 - Become a mentor.
 - Volunteer to tutor.

Many of our children come to us behind in their academic development. For this reason private tutoring with an individual who can only give aside a designated time to help a child is imperative to that child that they are loved and are deserving of the time and attention they are receiving.

- ◆ Volunteer for hands-on work project.
- Providing a quality residential living environment is important to the development and care of any child. At the BCV this is achieved through volunteers who work directly with BCV properties staff to complete tasks on cottage and campus needs lists.

cannot meet these needs alone. Your support is vital!

Together we can help these children and families truly understand the freedom, hope, and peace that Jesus Christ offered to them when he said, "Take my yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart and you will find rest for your souls." (Matthew 11:29-30)

Together we must be the example of Jesus in the lives of these hurting souls.

Please commit yourself to prayer and financial support of The Baptist Children's Village. By doing this you will help bear the burdens of hurting children and families in Mississippi and thus fulfill the command of Galatians 6:2a: "bear one another's burdens."

This Mother's Day, promote The Baptist Children's Village.

The following materials are available:

- Bulletin Inserts
- Offering Envelopes
- Video "Hope for Mississippi Families" (3 minutes)
- Family Prayer Guides
- Bulletins

Clip and mail to: P.O. Box 27, Clinton, MS 39060-0027
(601) 922-2242

E-mail: ccade@baptistchildrensvillage.com

Where is Mississippi's largest family?

INDIA NUNNERY CAMPUS

805 Flag Chapel Road, Jackson, MS 39209
(601) 922-2242

The India Nunnery Campus is the central headquarters for all campuses and programs of The Baptist Children's Village. The campus was named in memory of India Ruth Nunnery, youngest daughter of Executive Director Emeritus, Paul N. Nunnery.

The India Nunnery Campus currently houses 12 residential cottages, five staff residences, three office buildings, central dining, distribution center, staff off-duty housing, and chapel.

FARROW MANOR CAMPUS

150 Farrow Manor Drive,
Coldwater, MS 38618
(662) 233-2155

The Farrow Manor Campus, named for Ada Farrow who was the original donor of the land, can house up to 27 children. Farrow Manor is a rural campus which consists of three cottages, an administration building, recreation facility, staff house, and two staff off-duty houses.

REEDY ACRES CAMPUS

217 CR 438, Water Valley, MS 38965
(662) 473-3717

The Reedy Acres Campus is made up of three cottages which can house a total of 27 children. The campus is named for M. Guy Reedy, senior trustee of The Baptist Children's Village and longtime pastor of First Baptist Church, Water Valley.

DICKERSON PLACE CAMPUS

491 Dickerson Lane SE,
Brookhaven, MS 39601
(601) 833-8104

Dickerson Place is named for the late Earl Dickerson and houses two cottages and one recreation building/staff off-duty house.

These cottages are equipped to care for up to 18 children.

DEANASH CAMPUS

80 Sellers Street,
Wiggins, MS
39577
(601) 928-4599

Deanash is the former estate of the late "Dizzy" Dean and his wife Patricia Nash Dean.

This group home can house up to ten children at one time.



Programs offered by The Baptist Children's Village

EXTENDED RESIDENTIAL CARE

A plan of care for each child is made upon admission to the agency and is reviewed regularly. These plans are revised at least two times each year with input from the child, the family, and The Baptist Children's Village (BCV) staff who are involved with their care.

The primary goal is family reunification whenever possible. Otherwise, the objective is to develop a plan for enlisting an alternative stable "family." For some children who have been in multiple placements or who have no viable family resources, the BCV might be their family.

Most children who come to the BCV have lived in an unstable environment to some degree. Much effort and emphasis is given to provide an orderly daily routine so that children learn how to meet the expectations of family life.

There are some skills each young person must learn in order to grow and advance to the next developmental stage. This basic training is necessary if they are to mature and grow to be responsible adults. Age-appropriate independent living skills are continuously taught by staff.

Additionally, allowing the young person to participate in community activities and to work in the community reinforces this independent living training and affords them the opportunity to learn to manage and budget resources.

Every effort is made to allow BCV children to grow up in a safe, healthy, Christian environment, communicating to each child a sense of infinite worth in Christ.

CRISIS SERVICES

Emergency Care is a 30-day crisis care program intended to meet emergency needs of children ages four to 18.

This program includes crisis intervention services offered by a trained staff member. There are Emergency Care facilities on the India Nunnery, Farrow Manor, and Reedy Acres campuses.

Children involved in this service attend public schools and Baptist churches in the community. They also benefit from scheduled time with the BCV chaplain.

Admissions to this program are made through BCV Social Services offices by calling (601) 922-2242 for Jackson services or (662) 233-2155 for services in north Mississippi.

Chemical Dependency Unit is an aftercare program offered in concert with the Chemical Dependency Center of Mississippi Baptist Health Systems.

It follows the inpatient treatment program offered at the hospital, and is intended to provide a period of supervised care and therapy which extends beyond the inpatient care and treatment.

Mississippi Baptist Health Systems has full authority in admissions to the Chemical Dependency Unit. They can be contacted at (601) 968-1102.



RESIDENTIAL FAMILY MINISTRIES

The approach of Residential Family Ministries is to provide comprehensive intervention that encourages and supports each family member as the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the family are fully addressed.

This ministry is located on the India Nunnery Campus and currently has a capacity for nine mothers and their children. For further information, call (601) 922-8140.

Direct benefits to the family include:

- Family unit remains intact.
- Safe haven in time of crisis.
- Basic needs provided.
- Case management for entire family.
- Individual, group, and family counseling.
- Life skills taught by staff role models.
- Live-in staff that provide constant love and support.
- Money management program.
- Connection with community, employment, church, and educational resources.
- Fun, recreational activities.
- Transportation assistance.
- Ongoing educational opportunities.
- Christ's love shared daily in word and example.

CHRISTIAN WOMEN'S JOB CORPS

Christian Women's Job Corps was founded in July 1994 by the Woman's Missionary Union of the Southern Baptist Convention. It is a ministry project that provides a Christian context for women in need to become equipped for life and employment. It also provides an opportunity for missions through which women help women.

The BCV hosts a site for the Christian Women's Job Corps ministry to women on the India Nunnery Campus. These services are offered to women in the Residential Family Ministry of the BCV and to women in the community.

For further information, call (601) 922-5477.

ADVANCEMENT TOWARD INDEPENDENT LIVING

The Advancement Toward Independent Living (ATIL) program is offered to male adolescents who are between 17 and 21 years of age who need support and training in order to live independent of family resources.

The ATIL program envisions the use of four stages to develop skills and responsibility:

- Develop self-help skills.
- Develop social and interpersonal skills.
- Deal with separation issues and establish a sense of belonging.
- Live in the present and plan for the future.

Since the BCV attempts to teach age-appropriate independent living skills throughout its ministry, the ATIL program represents the ultimate goals of preparing young people for a fulfilling, productive life in society and representing Christ through the victories achieved in their lives.

NON-RESIDENTIAL COUNSELING SERVICES

There are three locations of the BCV Non-Residential Counseling Services throughout the state. Each offers affordable, Christian, professional counseling for individuals or families.

For further information, contact the office nearest you.

Jim Alford, D.Min.
The Baptist Children's Village
P.O. Box 2649
Tupelo, MS 38803-2649
(662) 566-7722
bcv1@misnet.com

Randy Cotton, Ph.D.
The Baptist Children's Village
P.O. Box 27
Clinton, MS 39060-0027
(601) 922-2242
bcv1@misnet.com

Chad Sauls, LMFT
The Baptist Children's Village
80 Sellers Street
Wiggins, MS 39577
(601) 928-4599
bcv1@misnet.com

ADMISSION POLICIES

The services of the BCV are accessible to children and their parents regardless of race, color, religion, or national origin. The BCV will consider for admission and/or service any boy or girl beneath the age of 18 years who is not a high school graduate, who is a legal resident of the State of Mississippi, and whose application is completed in the form prescribed by our offices.

The BCV reserves the right to reject the application for admission of any child whose needs cannot be met by this agency or who cannot accept and adjust to the living standards and environment of this agency, all as determined by the Administration.

The BCV can neither admit to custody nor serve minors without the written consent of parents or legal guardians except and unless authorized so to do by order of a Mississippi court of competent jurisdiction.

Requests for further information, or for consideration of a child or children for placement may be addressed to:

The Social Service Department
The Baptist Children's Village
P.O. Box 27
Clinton, MS 39060-0027

Phone: (601) 922-2242
Fax: (601) 922-7667
bcv1@misnet.com



HONOR YOUR PARENTS

You may not be able to repay your parents for all that they have done for you, but you can honor them with a gift to The Baptist Children's Village. This year, The BCV will send an acknowledgment to your special loved one as an honor/memorial on Mother's Day or Father's Day.

Mother's Day/Father's Day Honor Gift

The enclosed gift of \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 \$25 \$10 Other
is in (please circle) honor or memory of my parent(s).

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Given on the occasion of: Mother's Day Father's Day

Please mail to The Baptist Children's Village, P.O. Box 27, Clinton, MS 39060-0027

MONTH OF PRAYER FOR THE BAPTIST CHILDREN'S VILLAGE

Sunday, May 12 (Mother's Day) – Sunday, June 16 (Father's Day)

Friends,

It is my prayer that God will use this calendar to burden your hearts for the needs of his children and for families across our state. Satan is having a "hey day" with the families of our state. This calendar could become your bold assertion that with God's power we will no longer allow Satan to steal our children and destroy our families.

– Ronny Robinson, Executive Director

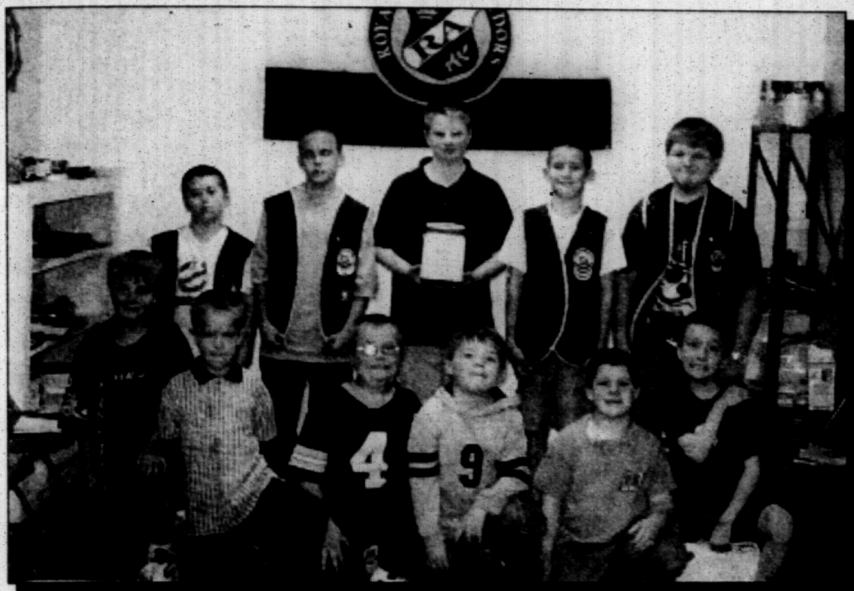
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
India Nunnery Campus <i>"Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her."</i> Prov. 31:28	Deanash Campus <i>"When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, nor shall the flame scorch you."</i> Is. 43:2	Dickerson Place Campus <i>"He gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might He increases strength."</i> Is. 30:29	Farrow Manor Campus <i>"...Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine."</i> Is. 43:1b	Reedy Acres Campus <i>"...you are the helper to the fatherless."</i> Ps. 10:14b	Northeast MS Family Ministry (Tupelo) <i>"...The Lord will rejoice over you with gladness. He will quiet you with His love. He will rejoice over you with singing."</i> Zeph. 3:17b	Christian Women's Job Corps (IN) <i>"And what does the Lord require of you but to act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."</i> Micah 6:8
Ronny Robinson, Exec. Dir. <i>"Lord, you have heard the desire of the humble, you will prepare the heart; you will cause your ear to hear to do justice to the fatherless and oppressed."</i> Ps. 10:17-18a	Henry Glaze, Asst. Exec. Dir./Programs <i>"Let us come boldly to the throne that we may find grace to help in time of need."</i> Heb. 4:16	Chip Price, Asst. Dir. Programs <i>"For I know the thoughts I think towards you says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope."</i> Jer. 29:11	Chrystelle Thames, Dir. of Public Relations <i>"Those that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint."</i> Is. 40:31	Claire Nowlin, Dir. of Social Services <i>"Let the little children come to me, and do not forbid them; for such is the Kingdom of Heaven."</i> Matt. 19:14	Peggy Taylor, Campus Life Coordinator (IN) <i>"And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love."</i> 1 Cor. 13:13	Chris Huff, Unit Director (IN) <i>"And He will turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers."</i> Mal. 4:6a
Terry Busby, Unit Dir. (IN) <i>"For the needy shall not always be forgotten; the expectation of the poor shall not perish forever."</i> Ps. 9:18	Randy Cotton, Clinical Dir. <i>"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."</i> Matt. 5:16	Michael Mote, Chaplain <i>"Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."</i> Matt. 6:33	Mark Rosamond, Dir. of Properties/Maintenance <i>"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing."</i> John 15:5	Doris Ray, Supply Dept. Manager <i>"And they shall bear the burden of the people with you, that you may not bear it yourself alone."</i> Num. 11:17b	Ed Nixon, North MS Area Administrator (FM & RA) <i>"But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God."</i> John 1:12	Chad Sauls, Case Manager (D) <i>"I will be a Father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord God almighty."</i> 2 Cor. 6:18
Joyce Wilson, Unit Dir. (DP) <i>"When my father and mother forsake me, then the Lord will take care of me."</i> Ps. 27:10	Residential Families Ministries (IN) <i>"My God shall supply all of your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."</i> Phil. 4:19	Bailey Cottage (IN) <i>"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God."</i> Phil. 4:6-7	Memorial Cottage (IN) <i>"But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?"</i> 1 John 3:17	Mize-Miller Cottage (IN) <i>"For He will deliver the needy when he cries, the poor also, and him who has no helper."</i> Ps. 72:12	Quarles and Garrison Cottages (IN) <i>"Let no one look down on you because you are young, but set an example to the believers in work, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, and in purity."</i> 1 Tim. 4:12	Robinson Emergency Care Cottage (IN) <i>"He must increase, I must decrease."</i> John 3:30
Dean Emergency Care Cottage (FM) <i>"God demonstrates His love for us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."</i> Rom. 5:8	Kelly Cottage (FM) <i>"For I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."</i> Phil. 4:13	Reedy Cottage (FM) <i>"For whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."</i> Rom. 10:13	Berry Cottage (RA) <i>"Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."</i> 1 Cor. 13:4&7	Brown Cottage (RA) <i>"Therefore be imitators of God, as dear children and walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling aroma."</i> Eph. 5:12	Crawford Cottage (RA) <i>"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."</i> Heb. 11:1	O'Neal Cottage (DP) <i>"Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."</i> Gal. 6:2
Earl Cottage (DP) <i>"The righteous man walks in his integrity; His children are blessed after him."</i> Prov. 20:17						

IN – India Nunnery Campus, Jackson
 FM – Farrow Manor Campus, Coldwater
 RA – Reedy Acres Campus, Water Valley
 DP – Dickerson Place Campus, Brookhaven
 D – Deanash Campus, Wiggins



JUST FOR THE RECORD

RAs of Immanuel Church, Vicksburg, raised \$103.20 for the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering. Pictured (front row, from left) are Rodney Richardson, Michael Richardson, Tommy Crutchfield, Grant Carter, Steven Roland, and Bryce Tedder; (back row) Dustin McGill, Jacob Thomas, T. J. Osborn, Patrick Parker, and Mark Stagg. Leaders are Bryan Banks, Jason Wooley, and Herbert Redd. Billy Brumfield is pastor.



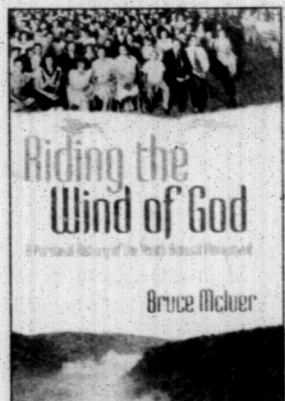
RAs of Immanuel Church, Vicksburg

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Twenty-one youth from Oakhurst Church, Clarksdale, recently participated in Bible Drill. Of the 21 participants, 19 proceeded to the state drill. Participants included: (front row, from left) Daniel Bingham; Chris Ferguson; Lora Guthrie; Paige Hutton; Natalie Havens; Mark Williams; (second row) Ann Thornton, leader; Brandon Whitmire; Stephanie Clark; MeriAnn Hutton; Laura Leigh Bingham; Courtney Ferguson; Kelley Andrews; Kellye Pharis; (third row) Chase McGarrh; Richard Pollard; Tully Ferguson; Amy Wallace, helper; Ashley Hollingsworth; Jessica Griffin; Andrea Perry; J.R. Sullivan. Not pictured: Grady Jones; Britney Shepherd; and Grady C. Jones, assistant leader.

Wheeler Grove Church, Alcorn Association, dedicated its new 15,000-square-foot multi-purpose building on March 24. The church had set a goal for 777 in Sunday School, and recorded 928. A goal for the offering was \$77,777.77 and \$125,392.57 was received. Paid In Full of New Albany performed during the worship service and Kara Blackard, pastor, brought the message.

Wayside Church, Vicksburg, set a goal of \$800 for Annie Armstrong, and received a total of \$1,114.50. Larry W. Haggard is pastor.



Youth of Oakhurst Church, Clarksdale

Ridglea Heights Church, Jackson County, recently held its first GA recognition service. Girls receiving badges and charm bracelets were Raven Brown, Kimberly Cochran, Taylor Scott, Fallon Martin, Haley Clark, Sara White, Holly Self, Lydia Ulrich, Emily Mowdy, Ashley Morse, Melody Ulrich, Blakeli Tanner, Brittany Neal, Tyne Horton, Krystal Brazell, Ashleigh Davis, Erica Edwards, Ashley Dixon, Heather Self, and Carley Adcock.

Children of Hillcrest Church, Jackson, recently enjoyed themselves at their Easter party. They played games, dyed and hunted for eggs, and during refreshment time they participated in a devotion time presented to them on "Resurrection Eggs."



Children of Hillcrest, Jackson

STAFF CHANGES

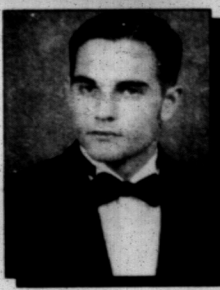
First Church, Overt, has called **Tony Stroud** of Richton as interim pastor.

Johnnie Place of Brookhaven has been called to serve as pastor at Terry's Creek Church, Magnolia, effective April 1.

Enon Church, Bay Springs, has called **Stanley Downs** as pastor.

Goss Church, Columbia, has called **Steven Goff**, a student at William Carey

College, as minister of youth. He previously served as youth minister intern at Sandy Hook Church, Sandy Hook. **Mark McArthur** is pastor.



Goff

James Jeffrey, former pastor of Poplar Springs Church, Vardaman, has retired from active pastorate as of April 14. He is available for supply or interim work. His address is 5218 Old Hwy. # 8, Big Creek, MS 38914. His telephone number is (662) 628-5948.

Claude Townsend dies at age 73

Claude Townsend, 73, died April 4 at the Mississippi Baptist Medical Center. Funeral services were held at Cleary Church, Florence, with burial in the Florence cemetery. Churches he pastored were Faith, Richland, and Metro, Jackson. Townsend established the American Christian Counseling School in Jackson. He also served as an instructor for Reunion Church, Dallas, Tex., and Immanuel Seminary, Atlanta, Ga. Townsend received his education at Hinds Community College, Mississippi College, and Immanuel Seminary.

He is survived by his wife Louise Gideon Townsend; children, Debbie Lott, Morton; Tesa Duckworth, Mendenhall; Claudia Steele, Florence; Keith Townsend, Mize; and Ken Townsend, Florence. Brothers, John H. Townsend, Florence; and Lester Townsend, Franklinton, La.; and 12 grandchildren.

Robert E. Jones of Columbia dies

Robert E. Jones, a retired minister of Columbia, died April 2. Burial was in the Cedar Grove Church cemetery in Columbia. Jones served in the ministry over a span of 50 years. He began his first pastorate serving part-time at Hepzibah and Salem churches in Monticello.



Jones

Other churches he served were Mesa, Tylertown; Calvary, Louisville; Providence, Hattiesburg; and Washington, Natchez. After his retirement in 1985, he served as interim pastor to Carmel Church, Monticello, and Cedar Grove Church, Columbia.

Jones received his education at Mississippi College, Southwestern Seminary, University of Southern Mississippi, and Golden Gate Seminary.

He is survived by his wife Mable P. Jones; sons, Charles R. Jones of Columbia, and Ronald R. Jones of Gulfport; brothers, Victor Jones of Prentiss, Felder McLaurin of Aiken, S. C., and O. W. "Bud" McLaurin of Robinson, Texas; and four grandchildren.

Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx
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ERN TIDW XG ZIHW, L
GEDICZ RITW XC ERN
WLP IA EDIJYTN; LCW RN
VCIKNER ERNH ERLE
EDJGE XC RXH.

CLRJH ICN: GNMNC

Clue: X = I

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: John One: Thirty-Six.

Four William Carey College (WCC) students won national honors at the regional Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF) in Spartanburg, S.C., and Southeastern Theater Conference (SETC) in Mobile, Ala. Zack Brown, a senior theater major from Tupelo, won the KCACTF Region IV Barbizon Award in Lighting Design for his work on WCC's production of A Christmas Carol, for which he will receive a trip to the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. Kelly James, a senior theater major from Meridian, won the Marian A. Smith Scholarship for Graduate Study in Costume Design at SETC for her cumulative designs for productions at WCC's theater department, Carey Dinner Theater, and the Utah Shakespeare Festival. Kristina Lucka, a senior theater major from Bratislava, Slovakia, placed second in the KCACTF Region IV Mehron Award competition for Makeup Design for WCC's production of A Different Drummer. Josh Penot, a senior theater major from Picayune, placed third in the KCACTF Region IV Barbizon Design competition for his set design for WCC's A Christmas Carol.

The Bobby Halford Baseball Camps will be held on the William Carey College campus in Hattiesburg June 3-7 for ages 7-12 years, June 10-14 for ages 13-17, and June 24-28 for ages 7-12 years. The camps will include fundamental aspects of all phases of the game with individualized instruction. Drills and team play are designed for every skill level. Participants will be grouped according to their ages and abilities. The June day camps are \$130 each and include noon meals, t-shirt, and instruction. Camp times are 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. each day. For more information or to obtain an application call (601) 318-6110 or 318-6192, or write Bobby Halford, William Carey College, 498 Tuscan Avenue, Hattiesburg, MS 39401-5461, or e-mail bhalford@wmcarey.edu.

Blue Mountain College's annual basketball clinic for junior and senior high girls will be directed by Jack Moser. The junior high clinic is scheduled for June 2-7 and the senior high clinic for June 23-28. The total cost for the week's instruction is \$130. The number will be limited to insure individual attention. Therefore, a waiting list may be necessary. A reservation fee of \$30 is required. Reservations or further information about the camp may be obtained by calling Moser at (662) 685-4771, ext. 146. The camp is sanctioned by the MHSAA, MPSA, and TSSAA.

The Steve Knight Basketball Camps for Boys and Girls will be held June 24-26, July 22-24, and July 1-3 on the William Carey College Hattiesburg campus from 9 a.m.-noon each day. The Boys' and Girls' Shooting Camps are June 24-26 and July 22-24. The camps' emphasis will be on all aspects of shooting. The Boys' and Girls' Post Man Camp is July 1-3. This camp will focus on development of inside players. The camp will be held in the Clinton Gymnasium. Campers will be divided according to age, skill level, and overall athletic ability. The cost is \$65 for each of the three camps and includes a t-shirt, excess insurance, and instruction. A \$25 non-refundable registration fee will be applied to the camp fee. The balance will be due first day of camp. For more information or to obtain an application call (601) 318-6111 or 318-6415 or write Steve Knight, William Carey College, 498 Tuscan Avenue, Hattiesburg, MS 39401.

The World Cup Residential Soccer Camp will be held July 5-8 on the William Carey College (WCC) Hattiesburg campus from 7:30 a.m. until 9:30 p.m. each day. The camp will focus on speed and agility training as well as box soccer. The camp will feature Doug Stovall, WCC's men's and women's coach. Stovall also has a United States Soccer

Federation (USSF) "B" license. Steve Clements of Tyler Community College; Oleg Chichkanov, a USSF "C" license holder; Rich Hefferden, keeper coach and Louisiana ODP; and Paul Martin, a USSF "B" license holder will assist Stovall with the camp. The camp is open to boys and girls of any school age. They will be divided into separate age groups for training. Cost of the camp is \$225 per camper and includes special instruction, a ball, T-shirt, lodging, meals, and insurance coverage. A deposit of \$100 or payment in full is due by May 15. Campers will have a highly organized schedule and be continually supervised. Applications will be processed in the order they

are received. For more information or to obtain an application call Stovall at (228) 897-7144 or e-mail dsrstovall@aol.com.

William Carey College (WCC) student Matthew Godwin of Picayune is the recipient of the George W. Truett Seminary Scholarship, valued at \$36,000, to Baylor University, Waco, Tex. He is a senior religion and history major at WCC and has maintained a 4.0 grade point average. Pictured (back row, from left) are WCC Cooper School of Missions faculty members Bennie Crockett, Daniel Browning, Daniel Caldwell, and (front row) Dorman Laird and Godwin.



Crockett, Browning, Caldwell, Laird, and Godwin

REVIVAL DATES

Beat Line, Philadelphia (Neshoba): April 27-30; Saturday, 6 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Tue., 7 p.m.; Saturday, Tommy Anderson, evangelist, and Marion Felton, music; Sunday a.m., Stanley Barnett, evangelist; and p.m., Mike Smith, evangelist; Monday, James Young, evangelist; Tuesday, Randall Creel, evangelist; Sue Lewis, music; Ben McDaniel, pastor.

Moselle Area-Wide Crusade: May 5-8; Sun.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Moselle football field (Moselle school gym if inclement weather); Gary Bowlin, Summit, evangelist; Randy McLeod, Laurel, music.

Sebastopol, (Scott): April 28-30; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon. and Tues., 7 p.m.; speakers are: Sunday, Randall Creel; Mon., Darren Chester; Tues., Nick Holden; Maria McLeod, music; David Bankson, pastor.

East Louisville, Louisville: May 19-22; Randy Hamilton, Springdale Church, Tippah, evangelist; Doug Hubbard Jr., Williamsville Church, Attala, music evangelist; Keith Dendy, pastor.

New Zion Church, Liberty: May 26-29; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Randall Creel, Lake, evangelist; Reggie Bridges, music; Ray Quinnelly, pastor.

Noxapater, Noxapater: May 5-8; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6:15 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Randall Creel, Lake, evangelist; Marion Felton, music; Kevin White, pastor.

Short Creek, Yazoo City: April 28-May 1; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Sonny Bradshaw, evangelist; Bill and Martha Martin, music; Alan Balliet, pastor.

Crooked Creek (Lawrence): May 5-10; 7 p.m. nightly; John Hilbun, evangelist; Steve Walker, music.

Newhebron (Lawrence): April 28-May 3; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; James E. Messer Sr., Theodore, Ala., evangelist; William (Bill) Hernan, Newhebron; David Wilkinson, pastor.

Mt. Nelson, Philadelphia: May 2-4; 7 p.m.; Danny Purser, evangelist; Jimmy Ross Gray, music; Terri Crawford, pianist; and Mack Alford, pastor.

Shiloh (Carroll): May 3-5; Fri. and Sat., 7 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m.; Gary Tanner, guest speaker; Doug Warren, pastor, music.

Bellehaven, Ocean Springs: May 2-5; 7 p.m. nightly and 11 a.m. Sunday; Burnice Havard, evangelist; Gilbert Emerson, music.

MS POSITIONS AVAILABLE

CHURCH AVERAGING 100 in Sunday School seeks full-time minister of music and youth or bi-vocational minister of music. Please send resume to Calvary Baptist Church, 2878 Old Hwy. 27, Vicksburg, MS 39180; or fax to (601) 636-7574.

MAIN STREET BAPTIST CHURCH Goodman, MS - seeking a bi-vocational or full-time pastor. Please send resume to: Pastor Search Committee, Main Street Baptist Church, P.O. Box 206, Goodman, MS 39079-0206.

FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH, Jackson is seeking a part-time staff member for a unique home bound ministry for members and the neighborhood. For more information, contact Dr. Greg Wolfe, P.O. Box 24189, Jackson, MS 39236, Phone (601)368-2983.

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SITE RECOMMENDED

Editor:

Since it is impossible to print most of the news stories concerning actions of the International Mission Board, North American Mission Board, the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention, and other Baptist organizations, perhaps you will print this letter directing readers to a web site that has links to Baptist Press and others. That web site is baptistnet.com/newssources. Another web site is Associated Baptist Press: www.abpnews.com

Lou Ann Lee
Pascagoula

CLEAR GIFT

Editor:

Just about every week a pastor has written with harsh comments about a female pastor. Several weeks ago I heard a female preacher. She was a better preacher than 80% of the male preachers I have heard. It seemed to me that the Holy Spirit had given her the gift of prophesy or preaching. On the other hand I have suffered through numerous sermons by men who either didn't have the gift of prophesy or did not adequately prepare to properly exhibit it. Did God make a mistake in clearly giving some women the gift of preaching which she is not supposed to use? Truthfully, I think that these preachers who would beat women over the head with some selected Scriptures are afraid of the competition.

The passages these preachers misuse also have the requirement for preachers to keep their children submissive and respectful. If all the churches with pastors who

fail this test were removed from the association, most of the meetings could be held in a telephone booth. Let the stone casting begin.

Ray A. Thompson
Jackson

UNITY IN CHRIST

Editor:

I have read many letters in The Baptist Record for quite some time. These letters are pro and con concerning Rivercrest Fellowship calling a woman as pastor, the qualifications for pastor, etc.

Some feel that the Scriptures concerning these things are out of date and they do not mean what they say. I feel that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God." This was through human beings guided by the Holy Spirit. I feel that Scripture is "truth without any mixture of error for its matter."

Some of the letter writers said we should go by what Gal. 3:28 says. I read this Scripture and get the following meaning: unity of all believers in Christ. Males and females are equal inheritors of Christ's salvation. Race, class, and gender are neither advantages nor disadvantages in possessing righteousness before God.

The unity here affirmed relates to spiritual life and standing before God. Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, wrote Gal. 3:28 and also Eph. 5:21-33 and 1 Tim. 2:11-15.

James K. Burke
Tylertown

STEP FORWARD

Editor:

I don't know if I want a woman as my pastor. I like the

one I have. However, as I was reading my Bible in Acts 2:17-21, Peter is quoting Joel about the Holy Spirit. In vv. 17-18, it states that God in the last days will pour out his Spirit on both your sons and daughters and on his servants, men and women, and they will prophesy. When I look up the gifts of prophecy and tongues, it tells me in verse three, "But everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement, and comfort." Chapter 14 continues on to v. 24: "But if an unbeliever or someone who does not understand comes in while everybody is prophesying, he will be convinced by all that he is a sinner and will be judged by all, and the secrets of his heart will be laid bare. So he will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, 'God is really among you!'" In v. 34 it states that women should remain silent but in 1 Cor. 11:5, it states that a woman who prays or prophesies should have her head covered.

I have many pastor friends who say in order to be pastor you must have the gift of the spirit of prophesy. The fields are white and the workers are few. I think it's time for the sons and daughters and his servants, men and women, to step forward and prophesy.

Annelle Caldwell Taylor
Grenada

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Editor:

Come to St. Louis and share the Gospel during Crossover St. Louis 2002 just prior to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting.

Seven associations in the St. Louis metropolitan area

are working together to conduct Crossover evangelistic events prior to the meeting. We have a great need for 500-600 volunteers to help us in Kindness Explosion, block parties, door-to-door surveys, and street evangelism.

We invite anyone who is coming to the SBC to come early and help our churches reach their area for Jesus. Training will be done on the evening of June 7 and all evangelistic events will take place on June 8.

We can use individuals and groups of people from churches to help us.

All volunteers will be sent a letter of assignment after we receive their registration. Please register by calling (314) 569-1190, or by e-mail at dechols@stlbaptists.org

Benny King, Dir. of Missions
St. Louis Association
St. Louis, Mo.

TO SIGN, OR NOT

Editor:

I would like to respond to your editorial of February 21 entitled, To sign, or not to sign. I am not sure that I see the difference between the definition of "creed" given in the editorial and what is being required of our missionaries.

What is the difference between signing the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message (BFM) and signing a separate letter of affirmation? Either way, missionaries are being told to sign a statement or receive "counseling."

How belittling to a missionary who has given years of his/her life to the service of our Lord and the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC)!

Any way you slice it, what the missionaries are being asked to do falls squarely into the definition of a creed that you presented in your editorial. It does appear that a line has been crossed.

Lifelong International Mission Board missionaries are basically left with a choice: Lie about their convictions and sign the creed, or tell the truth and start looking for another way to live out their calling.

For several years, I have been watching, reading, and praying as the leadership of the SBC crossed this and other lines that separate their practices from the responsible Southern Baptist freedoms I have known.

I keep asking myself, "How many lines do they cross before I've had enough?"

I wish the leadership of the SBC would just admit that they are using the BFM as a creed and then let each person decide, "to sign, or not to sign."

Chuck Strong
Senatobia



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

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MONTE VISTA BAPTIST CHURCH of Maryville, TN is seeking a full-time Minister of Youth and Young Adults. We are affiliated with CBF and SBC. Send resumes and recommendations to Monte Vista Baptist Church, 1735 Old Niles Ferry Road, Maryville, TN 37803.

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FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH McMinnville, TN is seeking full time Minister to Youth. Send resume' and cover letter to: First Baptist Church, Attn: Youth Search Committee, PO Box 508, McMinnville, TN 37111.

FULL TIME PASTOR NEEDED. Send resumes' to Westside Baptist Church, 1437 Sutherland Road, Lake Charles, LA 70611, Attn: David Lanier.

FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

Promise of restoration

Amos 8:1-9:15

By Sandra Gunn

Are there more ominous words than "the end has come"? Amos has been preaching doom and condemnation on the people of Israel for some time, and now God tells him to tell the people that the time is now; the end has come.

The basket of summer fruit (Amos 8:2) seemed to mean the final harvest of the summer — the end of the crop, the end of the agricultural year — and prophetically, the end of Israel.

The sin of the nation would culminate in a final harvest from which the nation would "never rise up again" (v. 14). It was a time of darkness and sorrow, and seemingly no occasion for hope.

Verses 11 and 12 paint the worst picture. There was to

come the famine above all famines; a famine of hearing the Word of the Lord!

This famine is not due to a lack of messengers, but to the total indifference of men and women to the living Word of the living God. This is certainly a description of our world today.

In that day, they despised the Word of the Lord, and had even attempted to silence his prophets. However, Amos prophesied that there would come a time when they would run from one end of the land to the other seeking a word from the Lord!

They are ready to listen now, if only he would speak. His words are heard no more in Israel. This is the price of continued disobedience and rejection.



Gunn

God had chosen Israel so that they might choose him. By casting him off, as their Lord and God, they cast themselves off and out of God's protection.

The fifth vision in chapter nine came to Amos, not as a symbolic object to be interpreted, but an event he witnessed as a bystander. God, standing by the altar of the sanctuary, gave the command to destroy the building completely, with no one escaping. There is no escaping God's judgement.

Israel had always felt that God had some special concern for her that he did not have for others. They were a special, chosen people, but because of who God is, and because of their continued disobedience, they would not be spared his judgement.

In verses seven and eight, God is telling them that he brought up the "Philistines from Capthor and the Syrians from Kir".

Here God was speaking of their traditional enemies! What a shock it must have been to be

placed in the same category with these other nations. Israel could no longer feel any sense of superiority. Israel was just like any other nation. God's judgement is indiscriminate.

Could we catch a glimpse of hope in verse eight? The Lord declares that he will not totally destroy the house of Jacob! Is it possible that "the end" is not the end after all?

The judgement of God is always tempered by mercy. Oh, how we praise him for that! Judgement can be viewed in two ways: the positive side, in which the emphasis will be placed on the correcting and chastening of judgement, or the negative side, in which judgement is for no other purpose than to punish the guilty.

God's judgement is for the purpose of bringing man to his senses. God's wrath is always under control, and used so that man will conform to the will and purpose of God. He who destroys will also save.

The conclusion of the book of Amos is a glorious picture of the age to come. The repairing and

rebuilding of David's house symbolized the process of restoration by which Israel would live again.

It would be characterized by the elimination of famine and want. The poverty and need of the past would be no more. Cities would be rebuilt; vineyards would be replanted; gardens would be fruitful and productive.

God promises here that they would "not again be rooted out from their land," which he had given them.

Though the prophet Amos did not preach of a Messiah to come, he did describe the conditions that would be realized in the Messianic Age. It seems God was preparing the minds and hearts of the people for the One who was to come.

God's message through the herdsman from Tekoa is for our day as well. God is still sovereign, and he demands righteousness in every area of personal and corporate life. Social justice is not an option. God continues to use Amos' message to call men back to righteous living.

Gunn is a member of First Church, Biloxi.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Practice holy living

Ephesians 4:17-32

By Robin Brumfield

This lesson is taken from Ephesians 4:17-32. It is about Christians living as believers and not as unbelievers. It also gives some specific examples of what Christian living means.

The emphasis is on practicing righteousness and holy living. The lesson challenges believers to practice righteous and holy living. Believers are to practice righteous and holy living, that is characteristic of Christians and this type of living differentiates believers from unbelievers.

Believers tend to struggle with this truth. Believers tend to live in ways that please themselves. For some, this results in their being violent or immoral. For others, it results

in them being indifferent to others. They do not hurt or violate others in overt ways, but they are still living only for themselves. They have not learned what being a servant of Christ is all about.

Believers must decide that they will not live their lives according to their desires, but will obediently follow God's Word no matter how difficult it may be for them.

People fail to take into account God's will and other people's rights. God's people are to differentiate themselves from unholy living through righteous and holy living.

This passage is broken into three sections. The first section deals with forsaking old standards (vv. 17-19).



Brumfield

Notice the emphasis in these verses — the dramatic contrast between living as a Christian and living as a Gentile or unbeliever.

Paul characterized pagan living as hard-hearted, insensitive, and immoral. He stressed the fact that if anyone, believer or unbeliever, refuses to heed the prompting of the Holy Spirit, then they will become callous and will not be able to heed to the Holy Spirit.

This is the reason that some believers can no longer tell when the Holy Spirit is talking to them. A person does not become callous overnight. It occurs over a period of time and is the result of failing to heed to the prompting of the Holy Spirit time and time again.

Each time it is a little harder to hear the Holy Spirit, until finally all communication with God through the Holy Spirit is ended. Christians must abstain

from living in any way(s) that would characterize them as unbelievers.

The second section is to embrace Christ's standard (vv. 20-24). Notice that in verse 20 the phrase "come to know Christ" ("learned Christ," KJV) refers not to the readers' conversion experiences but to their religious training following conversion.

This is made clear by both the KJV translation and "were taught" in verse 21 and verse 22. The word "surely" in verse 21 and "if so be that" in the KJV translates a term that in this context more accurately is translated "If it is true, and it is true."

Paul used the analogy of replacing an old (and out of date) garment with a new outfit in calling for Christians to replace pagan living with holy and righteous living.

Notice that Christians are to "put off your old self." This means that believers are no longer to live by satisfying the desires of the flesh. They are to

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for Christian Living

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Issue 4

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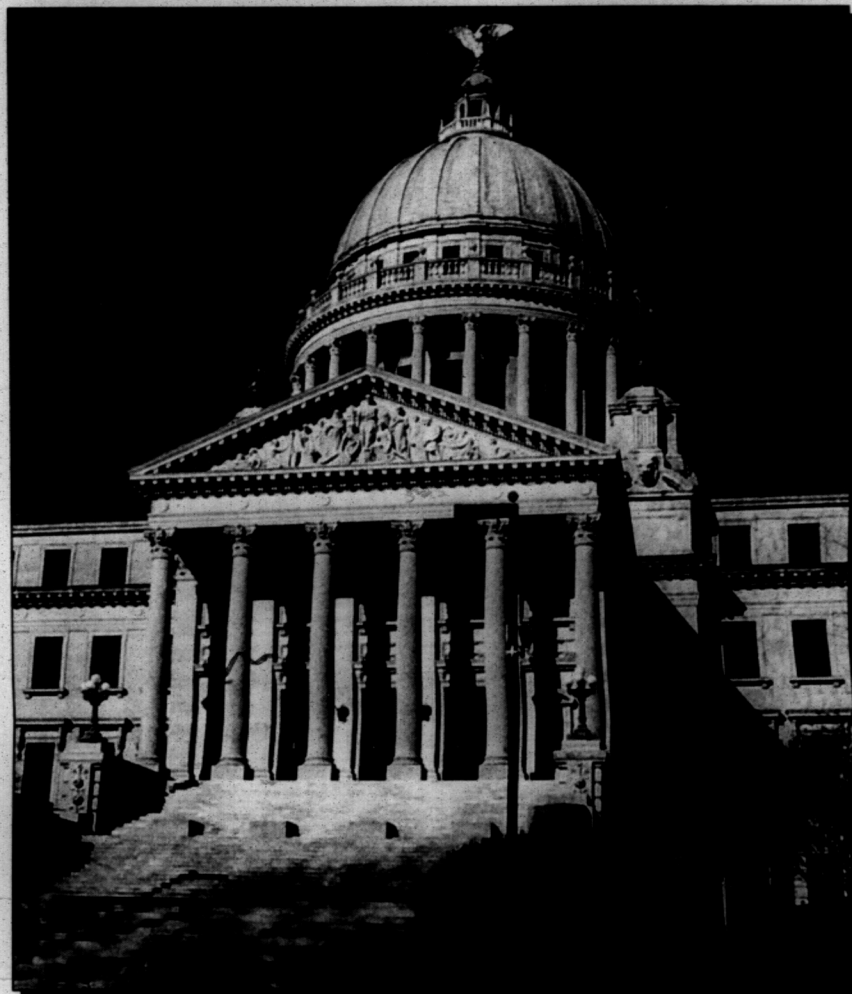
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If you are interested in receiving Christian Action updates via the internet and will share this information with friends and your church, please e-mail us at rwood@mbcb.org. Include your name, address, phone number, and church name.

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E-mail: satkinson@mbcb.org

FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

Promise of restoration

Amos 8:1-9:15

By Sandra Gunn

Are there more ominous words than "the end has come"? Amos has been preaching doom and condemnation on the people of Israel for some time, and now God tells him to tell the people that the time is now; the end has come.

The basket of summer fruit (Amos 8:2) seemed to mean the final harvest of the summer — the end of the crop, the end of the agricultural year — and prophetically, the end of Israel.

The sin of the nation would culminate in a final harvest from which the nation would "never rise up again" (v. 14). It was a time of darkness and sorrow, and seemingly no occasion for hope.

Verses 11 and 12 paint the worst picture. There was to

come the famine above all famines; a famine of hearing the Word of the Lord!

This famine is not due to a lack of messengers, but to the total indifference of men and women to the living Word of the living God. This is certainly a description of our world today.

In that day, they despised the Word of the Lord, and had even attempted to silence his prophets. However, Amos prophesied that there would come a time when they would run from one end of the land to the other seeking a word from the Lord!

They are ready to listen now, if only he would speak. His words are heard no more in Israel. This is the price of continued disobedience and rejection.



Gunn

God had chosen Israel so that they might choose him. By casting him off, as their Lord and God, they cast themselves off and out of God's protection.

The fifth vision in chapter nine came to Amos, not as a symbolic object to be interpreted, but an event he witnessed as a bystander. God, standing by the altar of the sanctuary, gave the command to destroy the building completely, with no one escaping. There is no escaping God's judgement.

Israel had always felt that God had some special concern for her that he did not have for others. They were a special, chosen people, but because of who God is, and because of their continued disobedience, they would not be spared his judgement.

In verses seven and eight, God is telling them that he brought up the "Philistines from Caphtor and the Syrians from Kir".

Here God was speaking of their traditional enemies! What a shock it must have been to be

placed in the same category with these other nations. Israel could no longer feel any sense of superiority. Israel was just like any other nation. God's judgement is indiscriminate.

Could we catch a glimpse of hope in verse eight? The Lord declares that he will not totally destroy the house of Jacob! Is it possible that "the end" is not the end after all?

The judgement of God is always tempered by mercy. Oh, how we praise him for that! Judgement can be viewed in two ways: the positive side, in which the emphasis will be placed on the correcting and chastening of judgement, or the negative side, in which judgement is for no other purpose than to punish the guilty.

God's judgement is for the purpose of bringing man to his senses. God's wrath is always under control, and used so that man will conform to the will and purpose of God. He who destroys will also save.

The conclusion of the book of Amos is a glorious picture of the age to come. The repairing and

rebuilding of David's house symbolized the process of restoration by which Israel would live again.

It would be characterized by the elimination of famine and want. The poverty and need of the past would be no more. Cities would be rebuilt; vineyards would be replanted; gardens would be fruitful and productive.

God promises here that they would "not again be rooted out from their land," which he had given them.

Though the prophet Amos did not preach of a Messiah to come, he did describe the conditions that would be realized in the Messianic Age. It seems God was preparing the minds and hearts of the people for the One who was to come.

God's message through the herdsman from Tekoa is for our day as well. God is still sovereign, and he demands righteousness in every area of personal and corporate life. Social justice is not an option. God continues to use Amos' message to call men back to righteous living.

Gunn is a member of First Church, Biloxi.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Practice holy living

Ephesians 4:17-32

By Robin Brumfield

This lesson is taken from Ephesians 4:17-32. It is about Christians living as believers and not as unbelievers. It also gives some specific examples of what Christian living means.

The emphasis is on practicing righteousness and holy living. The lesson challenges believers to practice righteous and holy living. Believers are to practice righteous and holy living, that is characteristic of Christians and this type of living differentiates believers from unbelievers.

Believers tend to struggle with this truth. Believers tend to live in ways that please themselves. For some, this results in their being violent or immoral. For others, it results

in them being indifferent to others. They do not hurt or violate others in overt ways, but they are still living only for themselves. They have not learned what being a servant of Christ is all about.

Believers must decide that they will not live their lives according to their desires, but will obediently follow God's Word no matter how difficult it may be for them.

People fail to take into account God's will and other people's rights. God's people are to differentiate themselves from unholy living through righteous and holy living.

This passage is broken into three sections. The first section deals with forsaking old standards (vv. 17-19).



Brumfield

Notice the emphasis in these verses — the dramatic contrast between living as a Christian and living as a Gentile or unbeliever.

Paul characterized pagan living as hard-hearted, insensitive, and immoral. He stressed the fact that if anyone, believer or unbeliever, refuses to heed the prompting of the Holy Spirit, then they will become callous and will not be able to heed to the Holy Spirit.

This is the reason that some believers can no longer tell when the Holy Spirit is talking to them. A person does not become callous overnight. It occurs over a period of time and is the result of failing to heed to the prompting of the Holy Spirit time and time again.

Each time it is a little harder to hear the Holy Spirit, until finally all communication with God through the Holy Spirit is ended. Christians must abstain

from living in any way(s) that would characterize them as unbelievers.

The second section is to embrace Christ's standard (vv. 20-24). Notice that in verse 20 the phrase "come to know Christ" ("learned Christ," KJV) refers not to the readers' conversion experiences but to their religious training following conversion.

This is made clear by both the KJV translation and "were taught" in verse 21 and verse 22. The word "surely" in verse 21 and "if so be that" in the KJV translates a term that in this context more accurately is translated "If it is true, and it is true."

Paul used the analogy of replacing an old (and out of date) garment with a new outfit in calling for Christians to replace pagan living with holy and righteous living.

Notice that Christians are to "put off your old self." This means that believers are no longer to live by satisfying the desires of the flesh. They are to

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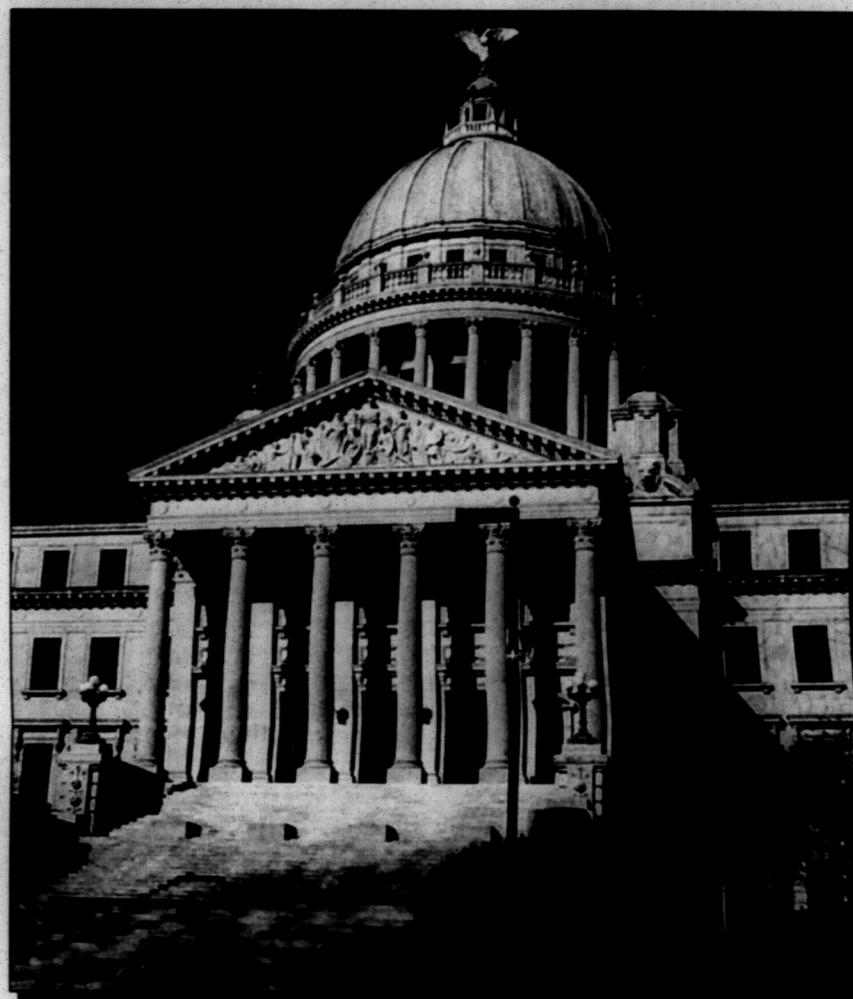
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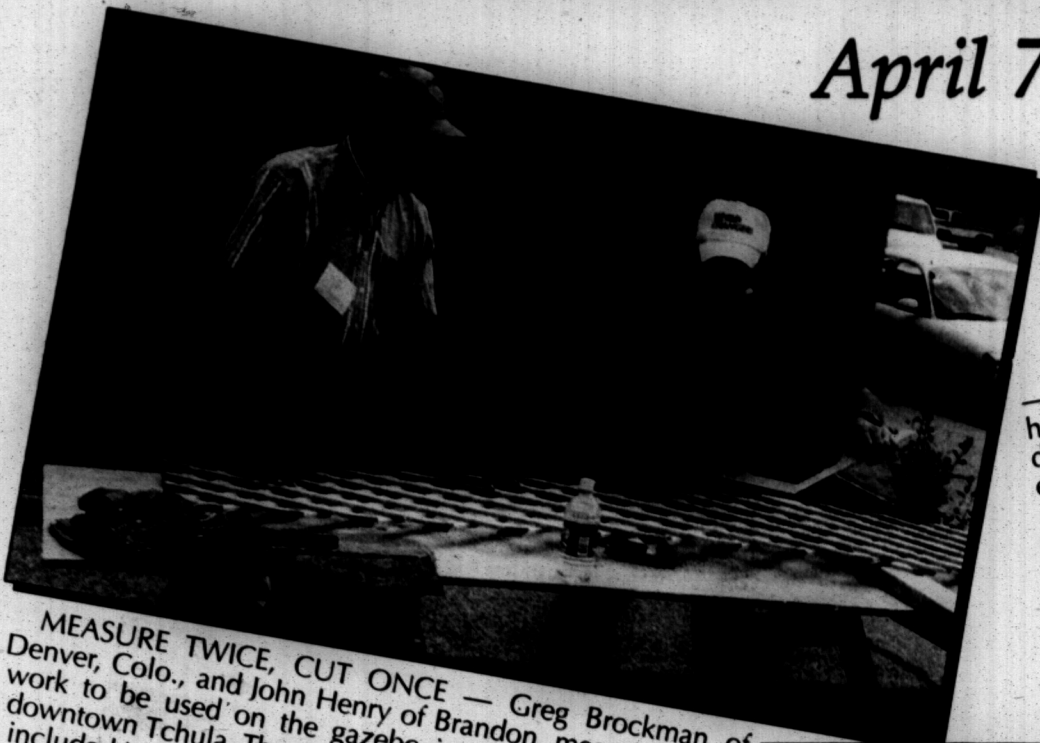
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MISSISSIPPI DELTA MISSIONSFEST

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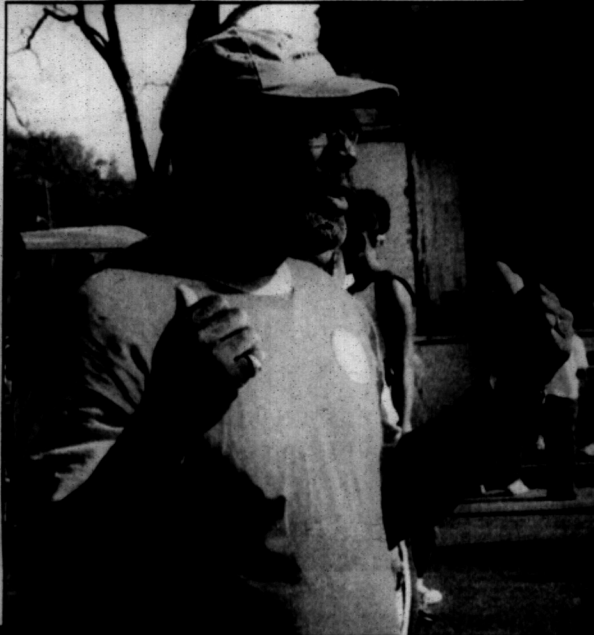
MEASURE TWICE, CUT ONCE — Greg Brockman of Denver, Colo., and John Henry of Brandon, measure lattice-work to be used on the gazebo in the Victory Garden in downtown Tchula. The garden was one of many projects included in MissionsFEST in the Mississippi Delta April 7-13.



IT'S A PARTY — Several hundred residents of Tchula enjoy a block party in the downtown area in conjunction with the Mississippi Delta MissionsFEST, April 7-13.



LORD, BLESS THIS HOUSE — Prayerwalkers pause before a home in Durant to pray for its occupants and their needs during MissionFEST April 7-13.



A PASTOR'S HEART — Robert Brown, pastor of Grace Community Church in Tchula, gives a "thumbs up" to the activities during the block party during the Mississippi Delta MissionsFEST.



NEIGHBORLY VISIT — An unidentified MissionsFEST volunteer (right) stops to chat and pray with a woman at her home in Durant during the Woman's Missionary Union project April 7-13.



A PLACE FOR REFLECTION — Volunteers put finishing touches on the Victory Garden in downtown Tchula. The garden is designed to be a place of relaxation and meditation and was one of many MissionFEST projects during the national event. ➤



WORSHIP AT LAKESIDE — MissionsFEST was capped off by a lakeside worship service at Central Hills Retreat near Kosciusko. An estimated 300 volunteers from 13 states participated in the missions project April 7-13.



LOVING RESTORATION — The home of elderly sisters Sarah and Avery Lee Williams is just one of many construction and weatherizing projects undertaken in Tchula during MissionsFEST, April 7-13. The home was in severe disrepair before MissionsFEST volunteers took on the task of making it livable.

All photos by Tony Martin